

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2103

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, ECIN, IA-ECOSOC, MX

SUBJ: SELA AND IA-ECOSOC MEETINGS MARCH 10-15

1. OUR READING OF SEVERAL RECENT AND INTERESTING CABLES (E.G. BRASILIA 1703; CARACAS 2180, QUITO 1473, ASUNCION 888, AND PORT AU PRINCE 489) CONFIRM OUR IMPRESSION THAT PROPOSED SISTEMA ECONOMICA LATINOAMERICANA (SELA) REMAINS VAGUE IN CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, PURPOSE, PLANNED ORGANIZATION, AND DETAIL. WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED CONFUSION IN OUR TALKS WITH MEXICAN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES AND ACADEMICS AROUND THE COUNTRY. ALTHOUGH MOST OF THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD OF SELA ASSUME THAT IT WILL EXCLUDE THE U.S. (ASUNCION 888 REPORTS AN EXCEPTION) THERE IS DOUBT AS TO WHETHER IT WILL "REPLACE OAS?" "CREATE STRONG PRODUCER CARTELS," MERELY "INSTITUTIONALIZE" CECLA, OR SERVE MORE OBSCURE GOALS.

2. IT OCCURS TO US, THEN, THAT THE CORRIDORS OF THE MARCH 10-15 IA-ECOSOC MEETINGS, TO BE ATTENDED BY ECONOMIC POLICY-MAKERS FROM AROUND THE HEMISPHERE, MIGHT PROVIDE US WITH AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCREET INQUIRIES ABOUT SELA NOT ONLY FROM PRINCIPAL ORGANIZERS VENEZUELA AND MEXICO, BUT ALSO FROM MORE DISINTERESTED LA DELS.

3. SUGGEST KS ATTITUDE BE ONE OF INTEREST BUT NOT CONCERN. CERTAINLY ANY EXPRESSION, HOWEVER FAINT, OF US DISAPPROVAL, WOULD PLAY RIGHT INTO HANDS OF ANTI-US ELEMENTS.

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